

**12th Annual Meeting of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF)  
18-21 December 2017, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland**

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**Coordination Session co-organized by National, Subregional, Regional and Youth IGF  
Initiatives (NRIs)**

**21 December 2017; 12:30-13:30 p.m. in Room XXV**

**- SUMMARY REPORT -**

1. The Host explained that the purpose of this session is to reflect the NRIs joint work done throughout the 2017 IGF cycle, and discuss ways forward.
2. With explaining that the agenda for this meeting, as well as its overall organization, was done by the NRIs in a bottom up manner, all participants were asked if they would have any edits to the agenda. As there were not edits or updates to the shared agenda, it was adopted in a following format:
  1. **Remarks by MAG Chair**
  2. **Remarks by UNDESA**
  3. **Remarks by IGF Secretariat**
  4. **Remarks by NRIs on the following items:**
    1. **In terms of NRIs joint work, what worked well in 2017 and what should be the NRIs objectives for IGF 2018?**
    2. **Should/can all NRIs come up with a topic of mutual interest for the NRIs joint substantive work for next year?**
    3. **What should be the nature of future collaboration among the NRIs; and the NRIs and the IGF?**
    4. **What is or could be the role of regional and sub-regional IGFs (in the broader framework of interactions between NRIs)?**
    5. **Feedback and suggestions on current and future support from the IGF (Secretariat, MAG, UNDESA) to the NRIs.**
  5. **Key messages from the session**
3. The Host invited the Chair of the IGF MAG to address the participants.
4. The IGF MAG Chair underlined the MAG's support to the NRIs work in advancing matters pertaining to the Internet and Internet governance. Specifically, remarks of appreciation were shared in regard to the fact that the NRIs work is based on voluntary basis, which makes produced work outcomes be impressive.

5. The Chair noted that the NRIs work is important for understanding the local issues, but also for building a comprehensive global agenda. It was remarked that the collaboration between the IGF and the NRIs is very important, but that it weighs in on the IGF's side. This collaboration should be deepened in a way that the IGF provides more support for the NRIs activities.
6. Representative from the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) noted that this Department team, based in New York, is encouraged to see the NRIs growth in quantity, but also in quality, with specifically referencing the increase in produced work outcomes.  
It was explained that through presence at this meeting, the UNDESA will note the NRIs requirements and suggestions, to be taken into consideration for future.
7. The Programme and Technology Manager of the IGF Secretariat expressed support with previously made statements, thanked the NRIs for their hard work and remarked that the IGF strives to have the IGF and NRIs relationships be mutually supportive and reinforcing.
8. The Host opened the floor for inputs from the NRIs on the first agenda item: *In terms of NRIs joint work, what worked well in 2017 and what should be the NRIs objectives for IGF 2018?*
9. In their opening remarks, everyone stressed that the IGF Secretariat has provided good support to the NRIs, through a dedicated Focal Point, and many noted the importance of produced outcome publications over the course of 2017 IGF cycle, as well as the importance of the NRIs collaborative sessions.
10. From the IGF-USA, it was added that the Network showed an excellent operating mechanism based on the bottom up consensus and broad commitment. A clear prove of it is a number of produced outcomes, including publications, as well as various sessions co-organized for the 12th IGF meeting. In addition, this respective initiative noted that the organization of informal gatherings where it was feasible (e.g. at ICANN meetings) worked well, as it resulted in having the NRIs being closer among each other.
11. Brazilian IGF noted that the guidelines on the purpose of the mailing list should be developed, as certain posts created confusion among the Network given that they were not related to the NRIs joint work. The IGF-USA co-coordinator noted that some even used the list for personal, marketing purposes.

12. It was suggested that there should be a mailing list exclusively dedicated to the work activities of the NRIs as a network. Appropriate guidelines or terms of references for posting to the NRIs mailing list should be developed.
13. From Armenian IGF and SEEDIG, it was said that the NRIs collaborative sessions were effective way for fostering engagement between the NRIs and for bringing relevant perspectives to the IGF. Hopes for the continuation of these sessions were expressed.
14. From the Pacific IGF, it was advised to think about ways for effectively consolidating inputs and with it contributing to the IGF, but also to the high level political forums.
15. Member of the Asia Pacific regional IGF's Multistakeholder Steering Committee (APrIGF MSG), asked for clarification on internal organization of the China national IGF. The Host suggested to have this meeting be concentrated on the collective objectives of the NRIs, and to have discussions focused on individual NRIs matters reserved for after this meeting period.
16. Coordinator of the Nigeria IGF and West Africa IGF noted the rapid growth of the NRIs network. It was said that this growth promises to be continued in the future, as there is interest by various communities to establish the IGF process. This was confirmed by stakeholders that have visited the NRIs joint booth at the IGF 2017 Village.
17. From the Colombia IGF, it was noted that the support from the IGF Secretariat and the MAG was important to this national IGF. In addition to organizing an annual IGF meeting, it was reminded that this initiative has done three capacity building courses. Regarding their work plans for 2018, it was said that they aim for becoming a reference point for Internet governance discussions in Colombia, as well as to include young people in process, through focused trainings. Also, this initiative will focus on attracting participants from small and medium size enterprises, as well as to expand the online participation. In order to attract new participants, it was advised for the IGF to identify ways of addressing the benefits of participating in the Internet Governance environment. Remarks were concluded by noting that national perspectives should be reflected at the regional and international levels.
18. A representative from ICANN noted ICANN's support toward the IGF and the NRIs, financially and in kind. As an important 2017 activity, importance of the NRIs Toolkit was outlined, for promoting and teaching the multistakeholder model, in addition to supporting the bottom up IGF processes. For the 2018 NRIs work focus, it was advised to continue having the IGF as a platform that reflects good work practices happening on national levels. Concerns were raised in

regard to newly established national IGFs that struggle for getting funding, as well as with achieving good level of stakeholder engagement. These and similar issues should be discussed among the NRIs, using the same methodology as it was used for developing the Toolkit.

With referencing to some of the Internet governance related process, such is the World Summit on the Information Society, that as an unintended consequences established the Working Group on Internet governance, that later resulted in creating the IGF, it was said that the NRIs followed similar path as these outcomes, and emerged as an unintended consequence of the global IGF. As a next level of unintended consequences, this member sees the national IGFs having impact on legislation, and in general real impact in their countries. However, in order for this to be achieved, visibility needs to be given to the national IGFs, with the IGF platform be the instrument to do this. The NRIs should be consulted about this proposal.

19. Government representative from the Netherlands, actively involved as co-organizer in the Netherlands national IGF, noted that this respective initiative is satisfied with the support the NRIs receive from the IGF Secretariat. Noting the Secretariat's important work, it was said that there should be a concrete support provided for the Secretariat's staff in order to have the IGF Secretariat strong, sustainable and independent. This is why the Government of the Netherlands committed to annually contribute to the IGF Trust Fund with 100.000 EURO for the time period of 2017-2021.

In regard to the future collaboration between the IGF and the NRIs, it was remarked that two dedicated MAG Working Groups focused on IGF improvements could offer pragmatic suggestions for potentially enhancing the collaboration between the IGF and the NRIs.

20. The MAG Chair thanked the Government of the Netherlands for their support to the IGF, and noted that this significant five years long commitment is four times higher than average previous commitments of this donor. Hopefully, this will motivate other donors to the IGF Trust Fund to continue supporting the IGF.

21. While noting the importance of support to their IGF process from the IGF Secretariat and the MAG Chair, the Polish IGF co-coordinator underlined the importance of capacity building. Having stakeholders understanding the IGF process is important for its long-term sustainability.

Concerns were raised regarding the amount of work that has been put on the NRIs, given the fact that the NRIs coordinator act on volunteer basis. However, it was noted that some outcomes, like the NRIs Toolkit, are valuable.

22. From the Italian IGF, it was added that the NRIs should explore effective ways for exchanging best practices on a concrete topic (for example, on cybersecurity or on artificial intelligence, and similar).
23. The Host asked the participants to reflect the second agenda item: *Should/can all NRIs come up with a topic of mutual interest for the NRIs joint substantive work for next year?*
24. From the IGF-USA it was said that the programme agenda of this national IGF is bottom up and always subject to broad consultations. Determining the topic would also need to go through broad consultations. It was added that with two collaborative sessions on access and fake news, there was broad support for continuation of work on these subjects among the co-organizers. It was advised that this should also be considered. Similarly, the Croatian IGF shared concerns that implementing a suggestion from asked agenda question could jeopardize the bottom up process.
25. As there were no other inputs, the Host suggested to leave this question for the first virtual meeting of the NRIs in 2018, to be discussed. All participants invited to comment on the third agenda item: *What should be the nature of future collaboration among the NRIs; and the NRIs and the IGF?*
26. From the IGF-USA it was reminded that during the IGF 2015 annual meeting, the NRIs and, at that time the Chair of the MAG, noted that the NRIs should reflect into the IGF, and the IGF should reflect into the NRIs, without any hierarchical reporting. It was advised that this nature of collaboration be maintained for the future.
27. From the Italian IGF, it was reiterated that the NRIs could identify few topics of mutual interest that could be jointly discussed.
28. The coordinator from the Nigeria IGF and West Africa IGF noted that the network functions well for now, and should continue that path. It was added that within the African region, local, national and subregional perspectives feed into the regional perspectives.
29. On behalf of SEEDIG it was noted that exchanging practices among the IGFs is important, and related to this, this subregional IGF organizes regular calls with the national IGFs within this subregion, to discuss matters of interest and exchange experiences.
30. Coordinator of EuroDIG noted that this initiative is focused on envisioning the role their respective initiative should have in regard to the IGF and other regional and national

IGFs. It was announced that EuroDIG will host a Retreat in January 2018, where among other things, EuroDIG's role in regard to the IGF and other NRIs will be discussed. It was noted that EuroDIG invests efforts in supporting the global discussions on Internet governance, and is of an opinion that national dimensions of the global Internet governance debate are the most valuable ecosystem's layer, as it provides bottom up inputs.

It was said that this regional IGF initiative sees itself as a linkage between the national IGFs and the global IGFs. In this respect, it will continue to serve as a gathering point for all national and subregional IGFs. It was noted that this could also save time for the IGF Secretariat, as in one place representatives could meet all national, subregional and regional IGFs. The coordinator underline that this initiative does not have any intentions related to establishing any hierarchical relationship or a reporting mechanism between the NRIs. However, it was noted that compared to some other NRIs, this regional IGF could have more resources, and with that more effective way to gather topics of interest for region and provide travel funding, especially for those that are coordinating national IGFs.

Finally, it was said that the NRIs collaborative sessions are very appreciated as a new format at the IGF, that enriches the discussion, and that they hope for these messages to be continued.

31. From the Brazil IGF, it was said that for the 2018, the Network could explore how to better structure ways of assessing consensus and plans Network's work objectives. As an example, it was added that the NRIs joint main session could be focused on documenting matters rather than having all NRIs reporting on different projects. Joint efforts in this regard could result in concrete documented output. In order to achieve this, the NRIs could work in subgroups in order to be able to yield more concrete results of the activities of this network.

In conclusion, it was noted that the NRIs should use given space in a more structured manner, with potentially having professional moderation and with specific methodology that the network should think of during January 2018.

In regard to the NRIs collaborative sessions, it was congratulated to all session organizers for taking this responsibility, and noted that this respective initiative had a very good communication with the national IGF of Portugal. It was added that this initiative's experience was that many initially wanted to contribute to the co-organization of sessions, but that plans changed last minute, what is seen in light of the overall workflow not have been well structured.

32. From the APriIGF, it was said that the development of the NRIs Toolkit was very valuable, as it has encapsulated the work from bottom to up for the first time in a formal way. Having the Toolkit developed on the level of the IGF gave a prominence to the

NRIs.

The collaborative sessions were referenced in light of being a positive movement among the NRIs network, as they allowed for the NRIs to bring discussion on some of the most pertinent Internet governance matters to their respective communities, and have managed to showcase the differences across countries and regions. These sessions concepts were seen as interesting to many IGF 2017 participants, external to the work of the NRIs.

It was said that hopefully these sessions could evolve in an intersessional work among the NRIs, with noting that the collaboration lines should be open, and the communication channels should be facilitated through the IGF Secretariat.

33. A member of the IGF-USA, that acted as a rapporteur for the NRIs main session, noted the importance of this session, as it brought to the IGF common themes. However, it was noted that a disadvantage for this session was a limited timing to less than three hours, and a two hours gap in between two session segments.
34. From the Armenia IGF and SEEDIG it was said that the presence of the UN IGF representatives at the NRIs annual meetings would help in supporting the NRIs work, with expressing understanding that it is challenging to attend all annual meetings, given the number of events and related costs.
35. From the Trinidad and Tobago IGF it was noted that the organization of the IGF events is challenging, as there is a lack of support from some stakeholders in funding, as well as in regard to the participation. The challenges are related for example in getting resources for online participation, getting a meeting venue and similar. It was asked if the IGF could find a way to provide some affirmative actions in this regard.
36. Member of the APrIGF MSG noted that inclusion is important for the IGF meetings. This is why it was advised for the IGF Secretariat to work on improving the conditions for having persons with disabilities equally included in the IGF meetings, by among other things, making the venue accessible. It was noted that this was a challenge during the 12<sup>th</sup> IGF.
37. From Sri Lanka IGF concerns were raised in regard to some organizations, external to this national IGF, trying to influence the process of this national IGF. It was asked if the IGF could help maintaining the independency of the process established in this respective community. These concerns were supported from the IGF-USA, with noting that the NRIs should have some standards in this regard, as not everyone is knowledgeable about the IGF processes.

38. Coordinator from the Croatian IGF noted that this respective initiative faces difficulties in explaining what is the IGF process to stakeholders in this community. This is why the Croatian IGF team has prepared a set of supporting documents that hopefully could help in this regard. Having the IGF's support while explaining the process to local stakeholders is needed from this perspective.
39. The Japan IGF noted that a strong message should be sent to public, that will indicate that having a multistakeholder model implemented on a national level is important.
40. On behalf of the Youth LACIGF it was noted that having youth integrated in the national and regional IGF processes is important.
41. In the concluding remarks, from the UNDESA, it was said that it is encouraging that a positive feedback was heard, in line with suggestions for improvements. This is indicative of a good approach that is underway regarding the collaboration between the IGF and the NRIs. It was noted that among the group there is a refreshing atmosphere where guidelines and standards are developed by the group, and are respected. The NRIs were complimented for translating the NRIs Toolkit to all six UN languages, in line with noting that this is always challenging for this Department, despite more available resources for this.
- It was said that inputs received during this session, will be passed on to the Director of the Division for Sustainable Development.
- It was added that the work of the NRIs could potentially be also connected to other forums and topics that for instance are related to the SDGs and sustainable development. With noting that some remarks were focused on funding the NRIs annual meetings, it was said that the IGF has its own financial challenges. However, the new IGF project document foresees funding for capacity building, specifically focusing on the national and regional IGF initiatives. These potential activities should be requested by the NRIs, through the IGF Secretariat. The NRIs were encouraged to spread the message for financial support, to their local stakeholders.
42. Coordinator from the Nigeria IGF and West Africa IGF briefly added a note that UNDESA could support the NRIs engagement with local Governments, where needed.
43. The IGF MAF Chair concluded this session by remarking that initially, the Tunis Agenda did not foresee the existence of the MAG, as well as the NRIs. However, over time, the work objectives demanded the MAG to be convened. The MAG ToRs indicate that among groups responsibilities is fundraising, and the support to the NRIs could be discussed also among the group.

It was briefed that the IGF MAG Working Group on multiyear strategic work programme

has produced a document that outlines all IGF intersessional activities and reflects the NRIs. It was suggested that the NRIs review the document and help in understanding what are the NRIs needs, and how can the IGF help and support.